



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Chattahoochee-Oconee
National Forests
Blue Ridge Ranger District

1881 Highway 515
P.O. Box 9
Blairsville, GA 30514
(706) 745-6928

File Code: 1950/2600/2300

Date: May 7, 2007

Dear Forest User:

The Blue Ridge Ranger District is seeking public comment on a proposed project to enhance recreation opportunities in the Cooper Creek Campground by creating a trout stocking access point within the campground. The Cooper Creek campground is located in Union County, Georgia within the Cooper's Creek Wildlife Management Area. Trout fishing is one of the most popular recreational activities on the Chattahoochee National Forest. The purpose of this project is to create an access for the Chattahoochee Forest National Fish Hatchery to stock trout in Cooper's Creek within the developed campground. This will create greater fishing opportunities for visitors to this area. Additionally, this access will help to compensate for the stocking access point at the Cooper's Creek bridge which was lost when the new bridge was built.

Campsite number 4 has been identified as the area to be converted for stocking access. The campsite will be closed and the tent pad, fire ring, lantern post and picnic table removed. The area will be graded to divert surface water from entering the creek directly and revegetated by seeding and mulching to control soil erosion. A short road to the creek will be graveled to provide access for the stocking truck. This road will be for administrative use only. All Best Management Practices and Forest Plan Standards will be followed. The location of this project is shown on the map. It is anticipated that the work will be done in the summer of 2007.

The Cooper Creek campground is located in Management Prescription 4.H (Outstandingly Remarkable Streams). This project will meet the desired conditions of this Management Prescription by providing greater recreational opportunities in the form of trout fishing on Cooper's Creek while maintaining the creek's natural setting. Prescription 4.H calls for the management of river/stream segments and their corridors such that the unique values they hold will be protected and perpetuated while providing for recreational opportunities in their natural setting. Goal 22 of the Forest Plan calls for water quality and soil protection through the use of watershed management that supports water quality. This goal is being met by taking a degraded campsite and turning it into an administrative access point that is stabilized. Goal 26 of the Forest Plan calls for management of aquatic ecosystems so that they are capable of maintaining populations of native or desired nonnative aquatic species. This project meets this goal by creating better access to stock rainbow and brown trout. Goal 31 of the Forest Plan calls for management such that an ecologically sustainable variety of high value, nature-based recreation opportunities are available in keeping with the interests of the recreating public. This goal is being met by the creation of added trout fishing opportunities, which are constantly in demand on the Forest.

The process is underway to determine any significant environmental issues and public concerns. You can help us in completing our analysis by providing comments on this proposal as we have described it. Your comments should be as specific as possible and contain the following information: your name and address, the project name (Cooper Creek Stocking Access) and



specific facts or comments along with the supporting reasons you believe your comments should be considered by the Deciding Official in reaching a decision. You may respond to the Blue Ridge Ranger District office at the address below:

Alison Koopman
U.S. Forest Service
P.O. Box 9
Blairsville, GA 30514

You may also provide your comments by fax at (706) 745-7494 (Blue Ridge R.D.), or e-mail your comments to chatt_comments@fs.fed.us. If you have any questions about this project please direct them to Alison Koopman on the Blue Ridge District. To have your comments considered in our planning process we need to receive your reply by June 4, 2007.

A copy of this letter and a map of the project can be found at the Forest website <http://www.fs.fed.us/conf/sopa/forest-health-nepa.htm>.

Thank you for your time and interest in the management activities on the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest.

Sincerely,

/s/ Alan Polk

ALAN POLK
District Ranger